



Government of
Saskatchewan

Annual Report 1984-85

Saskatchewan Employment Development Agency

86-02508/

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Minister's Letter of Transmittal



Honourable Frederick W. Johnson
Lieutenant Governor of the
Province of Saskatchewan

Sir:

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the
Saskatchewan Employment Development Agency for
the fiscal year ended March 31, 1985.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Paul Schoenhals". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul Schoenhals
Minister Responsible for the
Employment Development Agency

Report of the Chief Executive Officer of the Saskatchewan Employment Development Agency

Honourable Paul Schoenhals
Minister Responsible for the
Employment Development Agency
Province of Saskatchewan

Sir:

Presented herewith is the Annual Report of the
Saskatchewan Employment Development Agency for
the fiscal year ended March 31, 1985.

Respectfully submitted,



John K. Siu
Chief Executive Officer
Employment Development Agency

Introduction

Starting in 1982, the Government of Saskatchewan made a significant change in its approach to economic growth and job creation by shifting emphasis to the private sector, reforming the royalty system in the oil patch, providing new economic development incentives, and consulting the people of the province about desirable policy directions.

However, changing global economic and social conditions had been calling for increasingly more comprehensive and far reaching responses. The Government of Saskatchewan responded to this challenge by creating a unique agency specifically to address the many complex issues affecting employment. This agency was known as the Saskatchewan Employment Development Agency.

Background

Having identified economic development and job creation as its number one priority, the Government of Saskatchewan took steps to reflect this priority in the 1984-85 budget by focusing on the job creation component. The result was approval of a three-part Employment Opportunities Strategy involving business climate improvements, direct job creation programs, and capital construction projects totalling \$1.29 billion, administered by eight government agencies.

To build on this promising start, the Government established, in August of 1984, internal reviews and public consultations to monitor the progress of existing job creation programs and to solicit new and innovative ideas. This process identified two main concerns:

The large number of independent government programs seemed to be causing public uncertainty about the various services available and how to access them.

Also, there was a need for increased co-operation with the Government of Canada to avoid federal-provincial program overlap.

In September 1984, the Government of Saskatchewan again responded to the challenge and reaffirmed a commitment to job creation in fiscal 1985-86 as its number one priority. To carry out an effective response to the concerns outlined above, an Employment Development Agency was established to promote and co-ordinate employment development programs across government.

A New Direction

Creation of the Employment Development Agency signified a major new direction in addressing employment issues, in that "employment development" took the place of "job creation" as the goal of provincial employment strategy. Employment development means:

- an organized and orderly approach by government to job creation;
- creative thinking about employment opportunities and possibilities;
- a broader and more sustained involvement of the people in the creation and development of employment opportunities in their own communities;
- making government programs more understandable and more useful to individuals, groups and organizations;
- improved co-operation with the federal government.

These concepts were outlined in broad terms in the November 1984 Throne Speech:

"The Minister responsible for employment, in concert with his colleagues, will be refining and elaborating the employment strategy of my Government . . . my Government intends to place a special emphasis on employment development in the private sector (with) immediate priority given to increasing opportunities for employment during this winter . . . My Government believes that all of us (federal, provincial and local government, private sector, general public) must work together to explore every avenue that promises meaningful employment to our people on a sustained basis . . . consistent with and in support of the long-term economic development policy of the province."

The following month, December 1985, the Premier announced the creation of the Employment Development Agency and appointed a Minister Responsible for the Agency.

The Mandate

An Act to Establish an Employment Development Agency took effect in mid-January of 1985. The legislation was designed to be broad and flexible, empowering the new Agency to monitor, promote and co-ordinate the continued development and implementation of programs relating to employment in Saskatchewan and to ensure that every opportunity to participate in these and other employment development programs was made available to the people of the province.

In more specific terms, the Mandate of the Employment Development Agency was to:

- collect, maintain and update an inventory of employment development programs and policies offered by the governments of Saskatchewan and of Canada;
- promote and co-ordinate the development of employment development policies and programs by individual departments;
- ensure the consistency of employment development programs with the overall economic development policy of the province;
- ensure that the employment development process in Saskatchewan is one whereby the public-at-large and government share equally in the responsibility for its success;
- pay special attention to the employment needs of specific employment groups such as the rural unemployed, youth, Natives, women, and people with disabilities;
- act as a catalyst for employment development ideas inside and outside government;
- maintain close contact with other government agencies, the private sector, labour, N.G.O.'s, and other governments on employment issues;
- inform the public of employment development opportunities provided by the government;
- solicit and answer inquiries from the public concerning employment development opportunities in the province;
- encourage public participation in the employment development process by pursuing new ideas and new initiatives from all segments of society.

Winter Works

The previously quoted Throne Speech excerpt directed an "immediate priority to increasing opportunities for employment during this winter".

The Employment Development Agency co-ordinated the activities of five departments and agencies to provide an \$11.8 million Winter Works Program. The program created more than 5,000 jobs. The components of the program included Municipal Winter works, an expansion to the Saskatchewan Employment Development Program, expansion to the Youth Access Program, additional jobs funded through the New Careers Corporation and a Small Business Winter Works Employment Program.

First Ministers' Conference on the Economy

Concurrently with its Winter Works program responsibilities, the Employment Development Agency was directed to take a lead role in the First Ministers' Conference on the Economy.

This conference was held in Regina, February 14 and 15, 1985.

The Employment Development Agency, in conjunction with key provincial government departments, participated in the preparation of provincial background papers and speaking notes for the conference's four agenda items: investment, regional strengths, trade and training.

The Employment Development Agency also chaired the provincial committee which addressed the training agenda item.

At the First Ministers' Conference, five basic principles were agreed to by provinces and the Federal Government:

1. training and job creation must be economic in orientation with emphasis on small business and support entrepreneurship;
2. programming that is innovative, flexible and responsive to regional and local needs;
3. a recognition that responsibility for training and employment development has to be shared between governments and the private sector;
4. a commitment to equality of access to training and employment development programs;
5. programs that are simple, understandable and avoid wasteful duplication.

Building for the Future

At the fiscal year-end, in just two-and-half months of existence, the Employment Development Agency had attained a record of considerable achievement for a new agency.

Even more importantly, the Agency, concurrently with and through its activities, was helping to lay the foundation for future evolution of an orderly, flexible and regionally sensitive course of action to deal with employment issues. This pioneering groundwork, unique in Canada, resulted in major employment development initiatives which will be dealt with in detail in the 1985-86 Annual Report.